

ENG 381: Film, Media, and Culture

Gender on Film

Fall 2016, CRN 12098

Monday, Wednesday 12:00-1:50 PM

301 Gerlinger (GER)

Course Description

This course studies works of film and media as representational objects that engage with communities identified by intersectional categories including sex, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, nation, class, and ability. It considers historical and contemporary effects of prejudice, intolerance, and discrimination on media and filmmaking practices and modes of reception, as well as alternative strategies that promote cultural understanding and a valuing of diversity. Classroom discussion will be organized around course readings and screenings. Assignments and exams will supplement these discussions by providing opportunities to develop critical, analytical, and evaluative dialogues and essays about audiovisual media representation. ENG 381 satisfies the Arts and Letters group requirement by actively engaging students in the ways the discipline of film and media studies has been shaped by the study of a broad range of identity categories and by promoting an understanding of cinema as an art form intimately intertwined with its various social contexts. ENG 381 also satisfies the Identity, Pluralism, and Tolerance multicultural requirement by enabling students to develop scholarly insight into cinematic representational strategies.

Dr. Allison McGuffie

465 PLC

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday

10:00-11:30 AM

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The topic for this section of ENG381 is “Gender on Film.” It focuses on cultural questions of gender and representation in cinema. We will explore dominant as well as resistant representations of masculinity, femininity, and transgender identities on screen. We will employ a range of theoretical paradigms, including perspectives from feminist film theory, masculinity studies, queer studies, postcolonial theory, and transnational feminist scholarship. Because this course is for both new and experienced film students, the curriculum includes both introductory and advanced content.

Course Objective

At the end of this course, students will:

- Have knowledge of a wide range of theoretical arguments regarding gender and gender on film;
- Be exposed to diverse examples of genders and various ways they are represented on film;
- Be inspired to critically analyze gendered representations in media texts in the world around them.

Required Texts

Course readings are posted on Canvas. You are required to bring all course readings to class on the assigned days. Hardcopies are preferred. If you choose to use electronic reading devices, please use them courteously in class. If devices become a distraction or interfere with class discussion, they will no longer be allowed in class.

Films listed in the syllabus are required texts. If you miss in-class screenings, you are responsible for finding and viewing the films on your own. Most films are available on DVD at the UO Main Library.

Note on film content: Course films may contain content that is objectionable to some viewers. Exposure to all types of film content is an important part of the course and diverse material will be used to generate educational discussions. If you foresee problems with viewing required course materials, discuss this with me in advance.

Instructor-Student Communication

I encourage students to visit my office hours. I look forward to conversations with students and students regularly find that such one-on-one conversations enhance learning and improve course performance.

Email Policy: I am available via email to answer *occasional, brief* questions. Larger questions or concerns should be brought to office hours for more thorough discussion. Email communications must be polite and professional. Unprofessionally addressed emails will not be answered. Whenever possible I will respond to student emails in two working days, not including weekends or evenings. I usually check my email once per day during the week and once on weekends, so leave plenty of time for specific requests. Common explanations of absences will be noted, but will not receive individual replies. Questions that are answered in the syllabus will not receive an individual reply. I will not send grades via email. I will not accept assignments via email.

Technology Policy: All electronic devices must be silenced and stored out of sight before the start of class. Cell phone use during class will result in a zero participation grade for the day. Devices for reading course materials will be allowed as long as they do not distract from or interfere with course discussion.

Attendance Policy: This is a discussion-based course. Your participation grade depends on your active attention in class. You must be in class to participate. In the case of an occasional absence, you are welcome to email me and I will make a note in my records, but do not expect a personalized reply. You are responsible for obtaining the material covered in class from other students or you may come to my office hours to review missed material. There are no make-up opportunities for class participation. I rarely post lecture slides and do not provide study guides. It is in your best interest to attend class. In the case of an emergency or extended illness, contact me as soon as possible and we may arrange special accommodations. Greater than five absences without prior arrangements will result in a failing grade. Failure to participate in class discussion, regardless of attendance record, will result in a .33 final grade reduction.

English Department Assessment Procedure, Desired Learning Outcomes

1. Read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions;
2. Draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
3. Perform critical, formal analyses of literary, cinematic, and other cultural texts;
4. Write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose;
5. Employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments;
6. Employ primary and/or secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay's thesis.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is illegal, unethical, and will result in disciplinary action. Never present another person's work as your own. Do not turn in work prepared for other courses. Students are responsible for correctly documenting and citing all sources – including books, internet sources, films, and interviews – referenced for any assignment, accurately following an accepted writing style, such as MLA or Chicago. Academic fraud of any type is reported to the Dean of Students who enforces appropriate consequences through the process detailed by Student Conduct and Community Standards. Any student who plagiarizes or cheats on any course assignment faces penalties, including an F on the assignment and in the course. If I suspect plagiarism or cheating I am required to and will report the incident in writing to the student, the department, and the dean, who may assign additional penalties. Details: <http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards.aspx>

Accommodations for students with disabilities:

If you have a registered disability that may impact your work in this course, please contact me in the first week of the term. We will work together with the Accessible Education Center to make necessary arrangements to ensure your full access to course material and assignments. Details: <http://aec.uoregon.edu/>. Or contact AEC directly in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or disabsrv@uoregon.edu.

Assignments and Grading	Your grade (out of 4.0)	Multiply by	
First Paper Assignment (15%)	_____	x .15 =	_____
Exam 1 (20%)	_____	x .20 =	_____
Second Paper Assignment (20%)	_____	x .20 =	_____
Final Exam (20%)	_____	x .20 =	_____
Brainstorm Papers (10%)	_____	x .10 =	_____
Class Participation (15%)	_____	x .15 =	+ _____
		Total =	_____ (out of 4.0)

Assignments and exams will be graded on the 4.0 grading scale as follows: A (4.0), B (3.0), C (2.0), D (1.0), F (0). A “C” grade is given to average work that meets the basic requirements of the assignment. A “B” grade is given to work that meets basic requirements and demonstrates comprehensive understanding of course material. An “A” grade is given to work that meets basic requirements, demonstrates exceptional understanding of course material, and demonstrates original insight on course concepts.

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date listed in the syllabus. Each day late results in a 1 point deduction from the assignment grade. In-class assignments and exams will only be administered on the day listed in the syllabus. Make-up exams will only be arranged in exceptional circumstances with sufficient advanced notice. Not attending class on an exam day, with no prior communication and arrangement of alternatives, results in an automatic 0 for the exam.

How to Read and Prepare Assigned Readings for Class

You are expected to complete every reading and film viewing assignment on the syllabus. While occasional sessions will include a lecture format, most will function as discussions among the class and instructor. Therefore it is crucial that you read each assignment carefully. To do this, read with a pen and take marginal notes, especially marking crucial arguments and confusing passages. Before you come into class each day, be sure you can explain each reading’s main argument, and have one or two supporting points prepared from both the reading and the screening. This will also make preparing written assignments and studying for exams much easier, as you will have a body of notes and summaries to help you study.

Each class day will begin with a reading brainstorming session. You will write down one thoughtful question or statement relating to the day’s assigned material, which you will then use to contribute to class discussion. These quiz-style assignments will contribute to your participation grade.

The university’s expected workload outside of class is two hours for every course credit hour. For this four credit hour course, the expectation is eight hours of outside work per week, including reading, preparing readings, completing assignments, and preparing for exams.

Course Schedule

Unit 1: Basics of Feminist Film Theory

Mon, Sept 26 Introductions; Course Overview

In class:

Gilda (Charles Vidor, USA, 1946); 110 min. [finish Wednesday]

Wed, Sept 28 Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 1975; 198-209.

Mon, Oct 3 Mulvey, "Afterthoughts on Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 1981; 69-74. Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function," 1949; 3-5.

In class:

Riddles of the Sphinx (Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen, Britain, 1979); 93 min.; selections.

Wed, Oct 5 Bianco, "Why Carol Why," 2016; 1-2. Virtel, "5 Myths that Prevented *Carol* from Getting a Best Picture Nomination," 2016; 1-2.

In class:

Carol (Todd Haynes, US/UK, 2015); 118 min.; selections.

Unit 2: Masculinity Studies and Hollywood

Mon, Oct 10 First Paper Assignment Due

The Searchers (John Ford, USA, 1956); 119 min. [finish Wednesday]

Wed, Oct 12 Courtney, "Looking for Race and Gender Trouble in Monument Valley," 1993; 97-123. Freud, "Fetishism," 1927; 351-355.

Mon, Oct 17 Easthope, *What a Man's Gotta Do*, "Part I: Basic Masculinity" and "Part II: The Masculine Ego," 1-58, selections.

In class:

X-Men Origins: Wolverine (Gavin Hood, USA, 2009); 107 min. [finish Wednesday]

Wed, Oct 19 Neale, "Prologue: Masculinity as Spectacle," 1993; 9-19. Mondello, "Who's the Man?" 2014; 1-3.

Mon, Oct 24 McDougall, "I Hate Strong Female Characters," 2013; 1-7. Mikula, "Lara Croft, Between a Feminist Icon and Male Fantasy," 2004; 57-70.

In class:

Lara Croft: Tomb Raider (Simon West, USA, 2001); 100 min.; selections.

Wonder Woman Comic-Con Trailer (Warner Bros. Pictures, USA, 2016); 3 min.

Wed, Oct 26 Exam 1, in class (1 hour)

In class:

Ma vie en rose (Alain Berliner, Belgium/France, 1997); 89 min. [finish Monday]

Unit 3: Transgender Looking on Film

Mon, Oct 31 McGuffie, "Falling into Pam's World," DRAFT.

Wed, Nov 2 Butler, "Gender Trouble, Feminist Theory, and Psychoanalytic Discourse," 1990; 324-339.

In class:

Paris is Burning (Jennie Livingston, USA, 1991); 78 min.; selections.

Mon, Nov 7 Halberstam, "The Transgender Look," 2005; 76-79, 83-96.

In class:

Boys Don't Cry (Kimberly Peirce, USA, 1999); 118 min. [finish Wednesday]

Wed, Nov 9 In class:

Southern Comfort (Kate Davis, USA, 2001); 90 min.; selections.

Unit 4: Gender and Nation

Mon, Nov 14 Stoler, "Making Empire Respectable," 1989; 344-367.

In class:

Chocolat (Claire Denis, France, 1988); 105 min. [finish Wednesday]

Wed, Nov 16 Dawdy, "Proper Caresses and Prudent Distance," 2006; 140-158.

Mon, Nov 21 Rony, "Introduction: The Third Eye," 1996; 3-13, 16-17.

In class: TBA

Wed, Nov 23 Minh-ha, "Not You/Like You," 1991; 415-419.

Lawrence, "Women's Voices in Third World Cinema," 1992; 178-190.

In class:

Surname Viet Given Name Nam (Trinh Minh-ha, USA, 1989); 108 min.; selections.

Thanksgiving Break (Nov 24-25)

Mon, Nov 28 French, "An Analysis of *Nice Coloured Girls*," 2000; 1-8.

In class:

Nice Coloured Girls (Tracey Moffatt, Australia, 1987); 16 min.

Wed, Nov 30 In class:

These Hands (Flora M'mbugu-Schelling, Tanzania, 1992); 46 min.

Fri, Dec 9 Final Exam at 10:15 AM